

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

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C O N F I D E N T I A L USNATO 4643

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, IC, NATO

SUBJECT: UK-ICELAND FISHERIES DISPUTE

REF: USNATO 4627

SUMMARY: SYG LUNS GIVES CAUTIOUSLY OPTIMISTIC REPORT ON HIS ATTEMPTS TO MEDIATE IN UK-ICELAND FISHERIES DISPUTE. END SUMMARY.

1. IN PRIVATE COUNCIL MEETING ON OCTOBER 1 SYG LUNS REPORTED ON HIS SEPTEMBER 30 VISIT TO CHEQUERS WHERE MET FOR TWO HOURS WITH PRIME MINISTER HEATH AND FOREIGN SECRETARY DOUGLAS-HOME TO DISCUSS THE UK-ICELAND FISHERIES DISPUTE. THE CHEQUERS MEETING WHICH TOOK PLACE AT BRITISH INVITATION ON SHORT NOTICE WAS FOR THE SPECIFIC PURPOSE OF DISCUSSING THE SEPTEMBER 29 MESSAGES WHICH SECRETARY LUNS SENT IN HIS CAPACITY AS SYG TO THE UK AND ICELAND (SEE REFTEL).

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2. LUNS SUMMARIZED FOR THE COUNCIL THE IDENTICAL MESSAGES HE SENT TO BOTH PRIME MINISTERS AND A PRIVATE PERSONAL MESSAGE HE SENT. THESE MESSAGES WENT BEYOND THE GENERAL EXPRESSION OF COUNCIL CONCERN AND HOPE WHICH WAS DISCUSSED IN THE PRIVATE

COUNCIL MEETING THREE DAYS AGO. THEY WERE COUCHED IN TERMS OF PERSONAL APPEALS BY LUNS IN HIS CAPACITY AS SECRETARY GENERAL, AND THEY PROPOSED SPECIFIC ACTIONS WHICH EACH SIDE COULD TAKE TO MOVE TOWARD COMPROMISE.

3. IN ESSENCE, LUNS SUGGESTS A PROMPT MEETING BETWEEN THE UK AND ICELANDIC PRIME MINISTERS WHICH WOULD BE PARALLELED BY A WITHDRAWAL OF ROYAL NAVY VESSELS FROM THE 50-MILE ZONE. CONCURRENTLY, ICELAND WOULD TACITLY AGREE TO "TAKE NO MEASURES WITHIN THE 50-MILE ZONE" (I.E. CEASE HARASSMENT OF BRITH TRAWLERS) DURING THE TRUCE ASSOCIATED WITH THE MEETING OF THE PRIME MINISTERS. LUNS REPORTED HEATH SAID "HMG WOULD GIVE FULL CONSIDERATION AND STUDY TO THE POSSIBILITY OF MAKING SOME APPROACH TO THE GOI WHICH MIGHT HAVE WITHIN IT AN ELEMENT OF THE FRIGATES BEING WITHDRAWN PARALLEL TO THE RESUMPTION OF NEGOTIATIONS, PROVIDED THE GOI WOULD FOR ITS PART AGREE TO NO MEASURES WITHIN THE 50-MILE ZONE."

4. UK PERMREP (PECK) SAID THE ACTION WHICH IS FOLLOWING UPON YESTERDAY'S DEVELOPMENTS "WILL TAKE A LITTLE TIME TO CONSOLIDATE." ASKED HOW LONG, PECK SAID "WE ONLY HAVE FORTY-EIGHT HOURS." LUNS AGREED, AND SAID THAT HE HAD JUST SEEN A REPORT THAT DOUGLAS-HOME WAS AT THE VERY MOMENT MEETING WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF THE BRITISH FISHING INDUSTRY.

5. ICELAND PERMREP (TOMASSON) THANKED LUNS FOR FULL REPORT OF HIS LONDON MEETING AND EXPRESSED THE GRATITUDE OF THE GOI FOR LUNS' EFFORTS. TOMASSON INDICATED THAT HE MAY HAVE TO RETURN AT A LATER TIME TO DISCUSSION IN THE COUNCIL OF SOME RECENT "RAMMING" INCIDENTS, BUT UNDER PRESENT DELICATE CIRCUMSTANCES HE WOULD REMAIN SILENT.

6. WITH REGARD TO THE PRESS, LUNS SUGGESTED THE NATO SPOKESMAN BE ALLOWED TO SAY THAT THE COUNCIL MET TODAY AND DISCUSSED LATEST DEVELOPMENTS IN THE UK-ICELAND FISHERIES DISPUTE. THERE WAS NO OBJECTION TO THIS PRESS GUIDANCE.

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